



HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ELlicott City Historic District ■ LAWYERS HILL Historic District
3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043
Administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning

VOICE 410-313-2350
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June Agenda

Thursday, June 1, 2017; 7:00 p.m.

The June meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be held at 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. All cases are public meetings where any member of the public may offer testimony. Certain cases, such as requests for Certificates of Approval, are contested cases subject to the County Administrative Procedure Act. Information about participating in Commission cases is available at the Commission's website, www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning/Boards-and-Commissions/Historic-Preservation-Commission. Chapter and page references in this report are from the Ellicott City or Lawyers Hill Historic District Design Guidelines. Additional information may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Zoning by calling 410-313-2350. Requests for accommodations should be made at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

This Agenda identifies the work proposed and includes comments and recommendations from DPZ Staff. The recommendations included here do not constitute a decision of the Commission.

PLANS FOR APPROVAL

Regular Agenda

1. HPC-17-37 – 3802 Church Road, Ellicott City, HO-436
2. HPC-17-38 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979
3. HPC-17-39 – 6198/6200 Montgomery, Elkridge

REGULAR AGENDA

HPC-17-37 – 3802 Church Road, Ellicott City, O-907

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Diane Wimsatt

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the house dates to 1870. This property is also listed on the Historic Sites Inventory as HO-436, the Dr. Isaac Martin House.

The Applicant seeks approval for the following work:

- 1) Remove dying tree from northwest side of house by driveway. Replace the dying tree with a red bud. The Applicant seeks tax credit pre-approval for the work.
- 2) Repaint entire porch and replace rotten wood floorboards as needed. The porch will be painted the same colors, white railings with a green floor. The Applicant seeks tax credit pre-approval and Façade Improvement Program funds for the work.
- 3) Install gas meter on west side of house, against the left wall of the house, behind the shrubs.
- 4) Install 10-foot by 20-foot concrete patio in backyard.



Figure 1 – Aerial view of property



Figure 2 - Front of house

Staff Comments: The Applicant proposes to remove the tree located behind the driveway, and plant a red bud in its place. The Applicant said the tree has been in bad condition since they purchased the house and they are worried it will fall.

Chapter 9.B of the Guidelines states that Routine Maintenance includes removing dead or certifiably diseased trees and that an arborists certificate will be accepted for diseased trees. The Applicant has not had an arborist or other licensed tree professional look at the tree, so this application cannot be considered Routine Maintenance. Chapter 9.B recommends, “retain mature trees and shrubs. Provide for their replacement when necessary.” The tree does not appear completely healthy, as the crown is missing growth in several areas and the Applicant does plan to plant a new tree in its place. Staff finds the proposal complies with the Guidelines. The removal of the tree does not qualify for tax credits as it does meet the definition of eligible work as defined in Section 20.112 of the County Code.

The painting of the porch and replacement of rotten wood floorboards with new wood floorboards is considered Routine Maintenance. This item is eligible for tax credits per Section 20.112 of the County Code. The porch has peeling paint and soft/rotten floorboards as well, that require replacement. The repairs comply with Chapter 6.F recommendations, “maintain and repair porches and balconies, including flooring, ceilings, railings, columns, ornamentation and roofing, that are original or that reflect the building’s historic development” and “replace deteriorated features with new materials as similar as possible to the original in material, design and finish.”

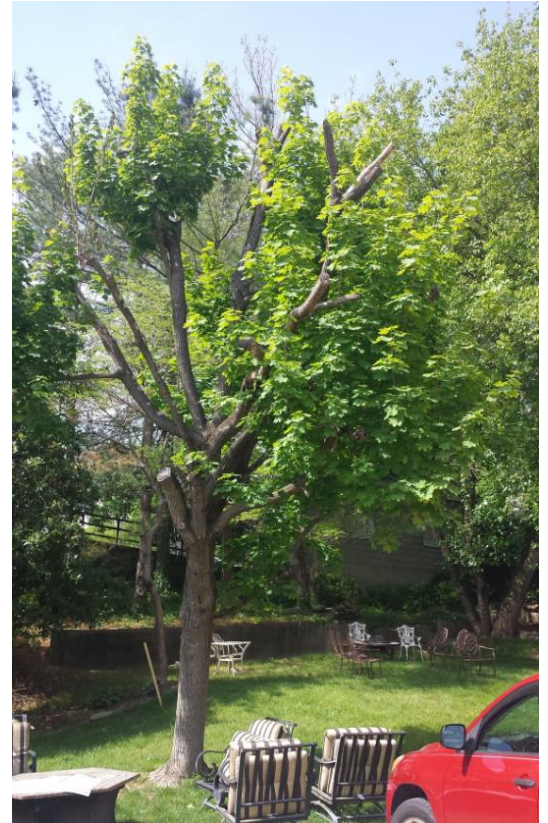


Figure 3 - Tree requested to be removed



Figure 4 - Close up of porch to be repaired

The placement of the gas meter complies with Chapter 6.M recommendations for the placement of equipment and hardware, “use landscaping or low fencing to screen ground level equipment placed in a location visible from a public way or neighboring property.” The gas meter will be located on the west side of the front of the house, by a drain pipe running down in the corner, behind the shrubs, as indicated in Figure 5.



Figure 5 - Location of gas meter

The Applicant also proposes to construct a 10-foot by 20-foot concrete patio in the backyard. The patio will be slightly visible from the public way, as the chairs in the background Figure 5 indicate the location of the patio. The location of the patio is also shown in Figure 6 and 7, below. The chairs in the photo are arranged so that the patio will end just outside of where they are sitting in a rectangular shape.



Figure 6 - Placement of 10x20 rear concrete patio



Figure 7 - Placement of 10x20 concrete patio

Chapter 9.D recommends against “new patios of concrete slabs in readily visible locations.” The rear yard is not highly visible from the street, but it will be slightly visible. Chapter 9.D recommends, “construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way” and “construct new terraces or patios visible from a public way from brick, stone or concrete pavers designed to look like indigenous stone.” There is a large granite retaining wall near the location for the proposed patio, as well as granite foundation on the house. Using stone as the paving material would be more in-keeping with the Guidelines recommendation to use materials compatible with the setting.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Denial of the concrete patio and recommends Approval of a 200 square foot stone patio, in a stone color to match the house.,

Façade Improvement Program: Staff will approve the application for the Façade Improvement Program based on the approval from the Historic Preservation Commission and the Maryland Historical Trust, availability of funds and receipt of quotes for the work. If approved, Staff will issue a pre-approval letter explaining the amount approved once the final bid is received. The pre-approval is contingent upon a final approval when the work is complete and availability of funds. Work cannot begin until a Certificate of Approval and Façade Improvement Program Approval have been received.

HPC-17-38 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Brianna Sanden

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1900. The Applicant seeks approval to construct a deck with a pergola off the northwest side of the house. The deck would be 16 feet wide and 14 feet deep. The deck would be built up against the side door of the house, where there is currently a small concrete walkway leading to the door. The deck will be constructed low to the ground from the side yard, but extend over the sloping area below that contains a granite staircase to the lower yard. The application states that the deck “would be constructed of pressure-treated lumber boards, with the floor boards simply sealed. The rails

would be made to match the rails on the front porch, only higher to meet with safety needs.” The Applicant confirmed via email that the railings will be 42 inches high and constructed of wood.

The Applicant also proposes to build a pergola on the rear half of the deck, to be 16 feet wide and 7 feet deep. The application states that “the top boards will be made to match the trim on the front porch, distributed 1 per foot, with two columns distributed at the supporting points out from the house. The columns will also match the columns on the front porch. The entire pergola; columns, railings and roof; will be painted white.”



Figure 8 - Proposed deck and pergola



Figure 10 - Aerial view of property



Figure 9 - Aerial view of property



Figure 11 - Existing porch railings



Figure 12 - Location of deck and pergola

Staff Comments: The proposed deck does not comply with the Guidelines. Chapter 7.B of the Guidelines states, “decks should not be added to a historic building’s primary façade or a façade highly visible from a public way...and should be related in detail as much as possible to the style and character of the building.” This chapter states that the Guidelines for building additions are also applicable for new decks. Chapter 7.A explains, “typically, the primary view of a building is its front façade. However, Ellicott City’s hilly topography and winding streets often provide prominent views of a building’s rooftop, side or rear elevations as well as the front façade. When designing an addition, all views of the building should be considered.” The side of the house is highly visible and is the first view of the house as one comes down Fels Lane. Staff finds the proposed deck and pergola are not related to the style and architecture of the house. The proposed location is not appropriate for this proposal and it is not common, if at all found, to see a deck in such a prominent location. It would be more typical to see the porch continued around the side of the house, although on Fels Lane front porches are a highly characteristic building feature.

The proposed deck would start at the top of the granite staircase, visible in Figure 13 below. The deck would extend out over the historic granite staircase and lower portion of the yard. The rendering in Figure 8, above, shows a gap in the railing where a staircase could be located. The Figure 8 rendering does not show a railing coming off the side door, which would be required to avoid a fall hazard down the staircase. However, the rendering in Figure 15, below, does not show the staircase. The Applicant has stated that they would like to construct the staircase, but the contractor was not sure that would be a good location for the stairs. The Applicant would like the option to add the stairs later if determined that it will work. If the Commission approves this project, Staff finds the stairs should come back to the Minor Alterations agenda for approval of the design.



Figure 13 - Location of deck



Figure 15 - Side view of deck and pergola

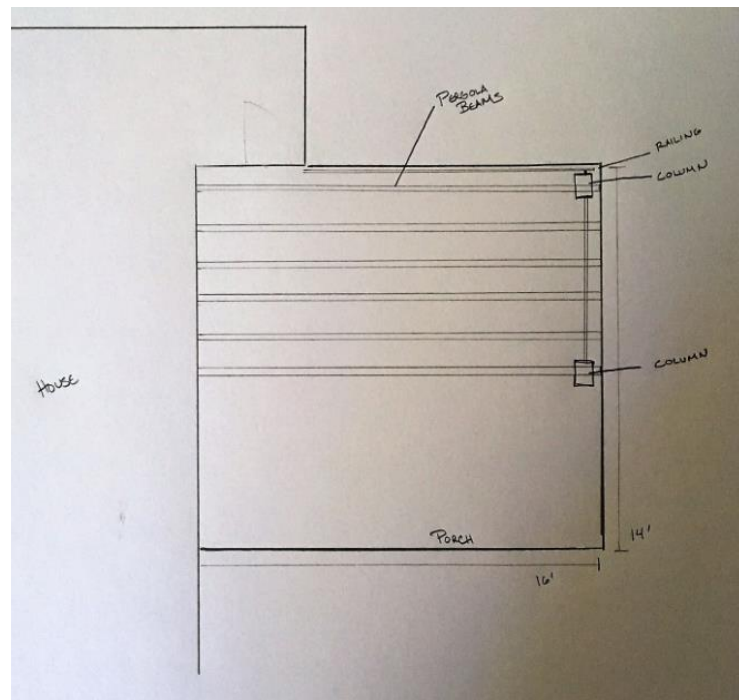


Figure 14 - Pergola truss birds eye view



Figure 16 - View of proposed deck from lower yard

The proposed white railings and columns that would match those on the historic porch do comply with the Guidelines. However, the proposed pressure treated lumber deck does not comply with the Guidelines. Chapter 7.C recommends, “on historic buildings, construct porches of painted wood rather than poured concrete, metal or unpainted wood. Use stained or unpainted wood only for less visible features of a new porch, such as the decking or step treads on the rear of a building in a location not facing or highly visible from a public way.” The proposed deck will be highly visible from the public right of way and pressure treated lumber is not appropriate. Moreover, painting the proposed deck to simply comply with the Guideline is not appropriate either because it will still read as a deck tacked on to a prominent side of the house, rather than a carefully designed, historically and architecturally compatible addition.

Staff recommended the Applicant consider a stone or brick paver patio in the side yard in front of the granite staircase, as the original rendering appeared to have the deck sitting on the ground. Staff also recommended the Applicant consider moving the deck and pergola to the lower level, where it would not be adjacent to the primary facade and so highly visible from the public way. The Applicant responded:

Yes, I understand that the deck is not the most ideal option, but putting in a stone patio would actually take away the slope of the hill right there, which is super useful during flooding, as it funnels the water away from my foundation. I wanted to keep the slope intact, to help with water drainage toward the creek, rather than my back porch.

Another reason is that I have an issue with digger bees, as that slope is the one area in my yard that gets good, continuous sunlight, and the bees go crazy making their nests there. Since I'm allergic to bees, I want to make the deck above this slope, to keep it shaded, and keep the soil moist enough to keep the bees out.

Staff finds a properly constructed pitched patio could still funnel water away from the foundation, if constructed properly. While Staff originally recommended a patio at the top of the stairs (which is where Staff thought the project location was), a terraced patio could also be constructed at the bottom of the historic granite steps, or the deck could project out from that point as well. Staff recommends against constructing the deck over the granite steps, which would hide a historic landscape feature. The area would still function for proper drainage with a patio, if it was constructed properly. By placing a patio or decking at the bottom of the granite staircase, the deck and pergola are no longer visible from the front façade and public right of way, and the proposal would comply with the Guidelines. Additionally, if the granite steps needed to be reset, that work would most likely qualify for the 25% Historic Property Tax Credit, as the granite steps appear to be a historic landscape feature.



Figure 17 - Suggested patio/terracing options

The proposal as submitted does not comply with the Guidelines and the construction of a deck and pergola in this location would detract from the architectural integrity of the house and neighboring historic homes. Furthermore, if there is a bee or yellow jacket problem, the construction of a deck would not prohibit them from surviving in the ground. An exterminator may be necessary to remove a ground hive.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the Applicant withdraw the current application and submit a new proposal for a stone patio or a lower deck that is in keeping with the Ellicott City Design Guidelines. Otherwise, Staff recommends Denial of the application as submitted, in which case the Applicant cannot return for one year for the same or similar design.

HPC-17-39 – 6198/6200 Montgomery, Elkridge

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Stephanie Tuite; Fisher, Collins & Carter Inc.

Background & Scope of Work: This property is not located in a historic district and it is not listed on the Historic Sites Inventory, although it is eligible for inclusion. According to SDAT the building dates to 1949. The Applicant proposes to demolish the historic house, along with four other structures on the

site and create a 7-lot subdivision. The other structures do not appear to be historic. The subdivision will take two existing parcels to create the 7 lots. Access to all new houses will be from a use-in-common driveway accessed from Bellanca Drive. The existing house can be seen marked 'TBR' (to be removed) on Lot 7. The proposed new house will sit almost where the existing house is. The use in common driveway is located on the edge of the lot.

Staff Comments: The main historic structure faces Montgomery Road. The house was constructed in a variant of a Cape Cod style and has a front bay with a fieldstone façade and a center fireplace. Cape Cod style homes are the vernacular style found in this area, but they are being demolished with more frequency for the construction of larger homes. This house is a unique style of Cape Cod that is not commonly found.



Figure 18 - Front of house to be demolished

Based on the subdivision plan that was submitted, Staff finds no reason why the historic house cannot remain as it fits on a lot and does not impede the construction of this subdivision. An addition could be constructed off the rear of the existing house if a larger footprint is desired. The neighboring homes are modest home; a more typical Cape Cod and a rancher. While there is larger new construction a few lots away, the removal of this historic home will negatively impact the streetscape.



Figure 19 - Neighboring homes



Figure 20 - Subject house and neighboring homes

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the house be retained in its existing location and not demolished.

Beth Burgess
Executive Secretary

Samantha Holmes
Staff, Historic Preservation Commission